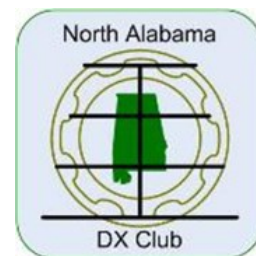


The LongPath

October 2022 — Volume 46 Issue 10

A North Alabama DX Club Publication



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Contributors:

AC4G

K8KI

KG4TEI

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N4NM

N5DF

NG3K

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From the Vice President

By Steve Molo, KI4KWR

Welcome to the fall season, and as said at W4DXCC, Contest Season is among us. The last month has been busy not only for myself, but several other members preparing for upcoming DXpeditions and checking our own equipment for low band, and as I said, the contests. Have you checked your coax and antennas in the last year? One thing that I always see during my daily routine is the need for electrical tape/coax seal/coax and connectors due to weather and wear. A lot of those items are now...out of stock.

This month will be the NADXC picnic, more details will be shared at this month's meeting. Last month John Stensby volunteered to lead planning and the picnic is now set for October 30th at the park in Monte Sano from 11-3pm...details to follow. This is the same weekend as CQWW SSB, which a good portion of us participate in, so I hope you will attend for those few hours.

What is the current hot item in amateur radio? ...Well what I did not expect was the new Yaesu FT-710, which will be on display at the meeting for anyone to check out. Not sure if the museum antenna configuration will allow it being on the air but it does not hurt to try.

Lastly, election time is upon us and I already have told the committee that I am not going to run for any position in 2023. So my push on 2023 officer elections is: give the three of us a break and come help run the club in 2023 and grow NADXC. It is not a hard position to cover with a few hours of work each month and planning the annual DX dinner.

I look forward to seeing everyone on October 11th at the Museum of Information Explosion at 1806 University Drive.



The Museum of Information Explosion

Upcoming NADXC meeting:

Tuesday, October 11th, 2022

6:30 PM

Location: Museum of Information Explosion and via Zoom

The Casual DXer

By Kevin Hibbs, KG4TEI

If you attended last month's meeting you most likely saw my latest creation - a magnetic loop antenna for 40m through 10m. My mag loop is based on a design by Adam Kimmerly, K6ARK which can be seen in this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uz5ZKkxGDQ4>. I made a few tweaks to Adam's design to give myself some extra bands, make it fit within a smaller travel case, and mount it directly to a tripod. This was all in an effort to make it more portable and usable for hotel and condo activation.



Closeup of the antenna's tuning capacitor

For those who may not have been at the meeting, my magnetic loop is constructed of 13 sections of flat aluminum bar stock which measures 1/2 inch by 1/16 inch. This allows the loop to fold down like an accordion when disassembled. The loop dimensions follow the standard 1-meter diameter design. It is fed at the bottom in a gamma match configuration with the tuning capacitor at the top of the loop. The folding construction allowed it to fit in a tactical box from harbor freight. At the meeting we used a mini-VNA to check the properties of the antenna.

On the air the antenna performed about like I expected. This is not a DX, contest, pile-up busting antenna. It is a compromise for the situation. Did I make contacts? Yes, but they didn't come rapidly. Using <https://pskreporter.info> I was able to see a map of where people could actually

hear my signal. From the Florida panhandle I was consistently being heard in the north-east, Pennsylvania up through Maine, and following an arc around through the Midwest to the southwest. I was also heard across the Gulf of Mexico in Costa Rica and some of the Caribbean islands. I even had a couple of spots in Europe. All of these reception reports were really weak. I was only putting out a 5-watt FT-8 signal and the reports coming back were in the -18 to -23 range. So yes, I made contacts, but they didn't always come easily and often required a few re-transmissions.

Now comes the big question, would I use this antenna again? The answer is yes, I like the portability and ease of use for hotel or condo activation. Would I use it for a Parks on the Air activation or a casual field day? Probably not. I have much better antennas at my disposal for those situations. When I built this antenna, I knew it was a compromise, but it fit the need I had for my vacation operating activities. It was extremely portable, the tuner was built into the antenna, and it didn't draw attention to itself sitting on the balcony of our condo for the week.

How about you? Do you have a favorite hotel/condo portable antenna you like to use when you travel? I would love to hear what others are doing to make my travel activities more successful.



The small mag loop antenna was easy to pack and deploy on KG4TEI's vacation

How I Hone My CW Skills

By Bruce Smith, AC4G

Whether it be DXing, contesting, or simply rag chewing, DXers should continually hone their CW skills and be ready for any and all on the air situations as they occur. We have all heard that there is nothing like practice, practice, practice. Many hams are active making QSOs to keep their CW alive when not DXing or contesting. This article reveals how I keep my CW skills sharp. Perhaps this is an idea you may not have thought about, but this technique really works for me and it is also productive helping others in emergency situations.

The method I use to polish my CW skills is participating as Net Control Station (NCS) for the Tennessee CW Net. Say what? Yes, I am NCS several nights a week for the Tennessee CW Net. The Tennessee CW Net uses Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) members to not only polish their CW (morse code), but polish their traffic handling ability at less stressful times and not during emergencies, but at a time that allows ham radio CW operators to leisurely learn.

If you know CW, but are a little rusty or are learning CW, one of the best ways to improve your CW is to check into your local emergency training nets or better yet, participate as NCS. This is how I learned morse code many years ago when I first began to learn and practice CW and the skills gained. Participating in the CW emergency net will improve your copying ability as well as your sending ability. But most of all, you can consider yourself being productive getting ready to aid in the next disaster, or bike race, or another public event. If you are learning CW for the first time, it is highly recommended that you do NOT try to learn by “dot” and “dashes”, but instead by the sounds of the “dit” and “dah”. Many NADXC

members have indicated their desire to learn or improve their CW.

The American Radio Relay League (ARRL) has numerous internet links to help with learning Morse Code or improving your code speed. Best of all, you do not need to be a member of the ARRL to access this information. There are code practice files which among those are files that teach CW to allow learning of individual characters of the alphabet. The ARRL broadcast from W1AW is another good source of morse code that sends code practice over the amateur radio HF bands according to their published schedule. When sending or copying fast CW, one learns to copy words or word groups instead of individual alphabetical characters.

What exactly is the CW Net? First, the CW net passes traffic or messages from individuals all over the world. Many recall that soldiers in the military fighting wars and out in the middle of nowhere in another country were able to get messages back to their loved one at home via Military Amateur Radio Service (MARS) or via ham radio operators like you and I.

CW operators make use of standardized “Q” signals used only on CW. There is also a specialized list of “QN” signals used exclusively on CW nets. These “Q” and “QN” signals are essential to understand and follow during each net session. Refer to the list of “QN” signals on the next page.

For purposes of explanation and demonstration, it is assumed that in this example NCS is AC4G and the station checking in is K8KI. Be aware that all NCS stations do not conduct exactly the same, but each NCS varies their method to

How I Hone My CW Skills (continued)

call the net with a little variance. During a typical net, most NCS follows the pattern described below.

The NCS begins the net in morse code by sending a series of “QST QST QST” (calling all Radio Amateurs) followed by “DE” (this is) “AC4G”. Next, NCS continues to send in morse code “THE TN CW NET IS OPEN” followed by “ALL ARE WELCOME”. After this brief preamble, NCS invites stations to QNI (check into the net) by sending “TN TN TN QNI”. Next a station who wants to be acknowledged to check-in, sends a letter in morse code such as the last letter of their callsign. For our example, K8KI would send “I”. NCS acknowledges the station by sending the same letter (“I”). That gives a station (K8KI in this example) an opportunity to send their callsign and send whether they are merely checking-in without traffic (station sends “QRU”) or have traffic to send to another ham by sending “QTC 1” meaning they have one piece of traffic to send. After several ham stations check-in (QNI), NCS will greet each one until no other stations desire to check-in. Most nets have only check-ins without traffic making calling the net by NCS an easy task.

Next, if there are no messages or traffic to be passed, NCS excuses all stations individually by sending their callsign and thanking them for checking-in. NCS sends, “QRU” meaning I have nothing for you, and then NCS excuses them by sending “QNX”. The station called sends “GN” (good night), 73, and their callsign i.e., example: “GN 73 K8KI”. NCS continues to call all

ARRL QN Signals For CW Net Use

QNA*	Answer in prearranged order.
QNB*	Act as relay Between _____ and _____
QNC	All net stations Copy. I have a message for all net stations.
QND*	Net is Directed (controlled by net control station).
QNE*	Entire net stand by.
QNF	Net is Free (not controlled).
QNG	Take over as net control station.
QNH	Your net frequency is High.
QNI	Net stations report In.*. I am reporting into the net. (Follow with a list or traffic or QRU).
QNJ	Can you copy me? Can you copy _____?
QNK*	Transmit message for _____ to _____
QNL	Your net frequency is Low.
QNM*	You are QRMing the net. Stand by.
QNN	Net control station is _____ What station has net control?
QNO	Station is leaving the net.
QNP	Unable to copy you. Unable to copy _____
QNQ*	Move frequency to _____ and wait for _____ to finish handling traffic. Then send him traffic for _____
QNR	Answer _____ and Receive traffic.
QNS*	Following Stations are in the net. *(Follow with list.) Request list of stations in the net.
QNT	I request permission to leave the net for _____ minutes.
QNU*	The net has traffic for you. Stand by.
QNV*	Establish contact with _____ on this frequency. If successful, move to _____ and send him traffic for _____
QNW	How do I route messages for _____?
QNX	You are excused from the net.* Request to be excused from the net.
QNY*	Shift to another frequency (or to _____ kHz) to clear traffic with _____
QNZ	Zero beat your signal with mine.

* For use only by the Net Control Station.

The above table appears in ARRL document [FSD-218](#).

stations and bid them 73 until the last station to check-in is excused by NCS. NCS then closes the CW net by sending “QRU” (NCS has nothing for the net) and then sends in morse code “QNX QNF” (the net is closed and the frequency is free). Be reminded, that all communication for the CW net is sent and received in morse code.

How does the SSB Phone Net differ from the CW net? In contrast to the SSB net, CW stations remain on frequency and monitor until NCS excuses them. If a station needs to leave early, that station can request permission to leave early by requesting “QNX”, meaning I request to be excused from the net.

How I Hone My CW Skills (continued)

One might ask how does checking into an emergency net or calling the CW net improve your CW? Nothing is never routine and the callsigns are not in any pre-arranged order making copying callsigns a task that improves NCS CW skills. If traffic is sent, each message is different and no two pieces of traffic are the same. Everything sent is not canned and requires skill to copy the CW message. Each station must also listen for their callsign to be sent by NCS. This requires all stations to be able to copy the code. It also requires all ham stations to send callsigns, information, etc. Participating in the CW net requires the ham operator to be familiar with their key/

keyer. One must be able to send CW, so that the receiving ham can copy CW via their sending ability.

In conclusion, each CW ham operator may have their own method of polishing their CW skills, but mine has proven successful and also productive to benefit those in need during emergencies. As a DXer or contester, knowing the code is fun and challenging, but requires mastering CW which requires some technique to keep your CW skills polished. If you are an SSB operator or digital operator, try learning the morse code. It is fun and can be a life changing skill for your community if disaster ever strikes. You can catch me on 3.562 MHz as NCS on Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday nights at 6:30 o'clock CDT if you care to check-in and improve your CW skills.

— GET PREPARED. GET OUT THERE. —



GigaParts
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Huntsville, AL 35806

2022 NADXC Officers and Directors

President	Bob De Pierre, K8KI
Vice-President	Steve Molo, KI4KWR
Sec./Treasurer	Chris Reed, AI4U
Directors:	Bruce Smith, AC4G
	Fred Kepner, K3FRK
(Ex-Officio)	Steve Werner, AG4W

How to Join

Come to a club meeting or send in an application by mail (form on www.NADXC.org)

Monthly Meetings

Meetings are held at the Museum of Information Explosion at 6:30pm on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Participants can also join the meeting virtually via [Zoom](https://zoom.us).

This edition of The LongPath published by:
Fred Kepner, K3FRK

Club Business and Announcements

Financial Report

By Bob DePierre, K8KI

Steve Molo has given me the month off – a relief. I'm taking some vacation time. Shown below is the present state of the club's finances. Please note subtotals are aligned left and in italics. Column totals are aligned right. As you can see, the year's target was balanced and close to zero (actually +\$2). At present we are \$1,167.30 in the black. The bank delta for September was - \$50.36.

Of note this month is the cost of the grand prize at the banquet. The Yaesu DX-10 radio is a top of the line piece of equipment and it drives a lot of interest...and may sell quite a few tickets to the event. Unless economics change over the next year, we may expect a similar expense then. Luck-

ily, the expense was partially offset by a \$300 gift from Mark Brown/N4BCD and the Hamfest. You may have noticed that the Hamfest Committee took some new financial risks this year, which appears to have paid off for them.

We have a couple more events this year, and we'll discuss them at the October meeting. Last month, I asked John Stensby/N5DF to plan a club picnic. He reserved the park at Monte Sano, a beautiful location, on Sunday afternoon, October 30. This event will require club participation for food and radio displays. John will lead the discussion at the next meeting.

We will also need to schedule a Christmas party in December.

Budget Category	Targets	September Activity	Year to Date
Year Start	7,521		
Month Start		8,738.66	
Dues In	720		978.7
Recurring Exp	-668		-216.88
Sales	300		650
Discretionary Exp	-1,000		-1,000.00
DX Banquet	650	-50.36	755.48
venue			-753
food			-2,326.00
speaker			-384.36
tickets		36	3,605.20
raffle			700
grand prize		-386.36	-386.36
gift from Hamfest		300	300
Bank Delta	2		1,167.30
Month End		8,688.30	8,688.30

NADXC Annual Picnic - October 30th

By John Stensby, N5DF

The annual NADXC Picnic will be held Sunday, Oct. 30. We will feast at the Small Pavilion, shown above, on Monte Sano. The club has the pavilion reserved from 11AM to 3PM. Enter the park through the main gate, and park in the large lot. You will not be charged for parking if you tell the gate keeper you are with the NADXC (we get 30 parking slots with our payment of the pavilion rental fee).



Figure 1: Small Pavilion on Monte Sano

As in the past, this event is “pot luck”. Bring a dish or two (maybe three!) of your favorite “eats” to brag about and impress your fellow club members. AC power is not available, so forget about appliances that must be plugged-in. Plan on taking your first bite around high noon.

Folks, this is a fun event! As proof, I offer



Figure 2: Kevin KG4TEI working DX from his mountain-top location.

pictures taken at the 2015 and 2019 (our last pre-pandemic) events. See Kevin, KG4TEI, running DX from his in-a-box station (we had three stations on the air). And, note the smiles on the faces of our fellow DX’ers while riding on Bruce’s, AC4G, flat-bed trailer. So, come to the mountain and enjoy the afternoon with fellow club members!



Figure 3: Hams on a trailer touring the farm.

Upcoming DX Contests

By Chuck Lewis, N4NM

OceaniaDXcontest

Oceania DX Contest, CW, (CW) 160-10 meters

Oct. 8, 0600Z to Oct. 9, 0600Z

Exchange: RS & serial No.

See page 70, Oct. QST and

www.oceaniadxcontest.com

UBA ON Contest, CW, (CW), 80 Meters



Oct. 9, 0600Z to 0900Z

Exchange: RST, serial No., ON section (if any)

See page 70, Oct. QST and <https://www.uba.be/en/hf/contest-rules/on-contest>

ARRL EME Contest, (CW, SSB, DIG), 50-1296 MHz



Oct. 15, 0000z to Oct. 16, 2359Z

Exchange: Signal report

See page 70, Oct. QST and www.arrl.org/eme-contest



JARTS WW RTTY Contest, (DIG), 80-10 meters

Oct. 15, 0000Z to Oct. 16, 24359Z

Exchange: RS(T) & op's age

See page 70, Oct. QST and www.jarts.jp/rules2022.html



Worked All Germany Contest, (SSB & CW), 20-10 meters

Oct 15 1500Z to Oct 16, 1459Z

Exchange: RS(T) plus serial number or DOK code

See page 70 Oct. QST and www.darc.de

Asia-Pacific Fall Sprint, (CW), 15 & 20 meters



Oct. 16, 0000Z-0200Z,

Exchange: RST plus serial number

See page 70, Oct QST and

www.jsfc.org/apsprint

Argentina National 7 MHz contest, (SSB), 40m



Oct. 15, 2130z to 2230Z

Exchange: RS, 2-digit year first licensed

See page 70, Oct. QST and lu4aa.org

Stew Perry Topband Challenge, (CW), 160m



Oct. 22, 1500Z to Oct. 23, 1500Z

Exchange: 4-character grid square

See page 75, Oct. QST and www.kkn.net/stew

Upcoming DX Contests (continued)



YB8DXPI FT8 Contest, (FT8), 160-10 meters

Oct. 22, 0000z to Oct. 23, 2359Z

Exchange: 4-Char. grid square

See page 70, Oct. QST and

www.contest.yb8dxpi.net/rules



UK/EI DX contest, (SSB), 80-10 meters

Oct. 22, 1200Z to Oc. 23, 2359Z

Exchange: RS, Serial No. or district code

See page 70, Oct. QST and www.ukaicc.com/dx-contest-rules.php

CQ WW SSB, (SSB), 160-10 meters

Oct. 29, 0000Z to Oct 30, 2359Z



Exchange: RS & CQ zone

See page 70 Oct. QST and

www.cqww.com/rules.htm

Dates & times often change or are misprinted in the journals; beware. Also, check the cluster: "sh/contest". Have fun!

Nomination of 2023 NADXC Board of Directors

From the Nomination Committee:

At the time of publication we have not filled a complete slate of officers. We will be continuing our search for the next few days. As we look for folks to fill these roles we ask that you take the time to consider yourself and what you may be able to offer to the club. The officers need not be perfect to fill the responsibilities, but rather willing and able to be servants to the club. There will always be challenges, but there are plenty of people in the club who have held offices that can be leaned on for advice and help.

We ask now, if you feel like you could serve as a leader for this club, that you contact the nomination committee via our email addresses listed on the club website. We need people to step forward and be willing to lead our group to continue our mission of support for DXpeditions and promoting DX activities.

Nomination Committee

Kevin Hibbs, KG4TEI, Chairman

Chuck Lewis, N4NM

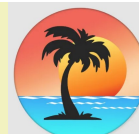
John Stensby, N5DF





DXpeditions in October 2022

Reprinted by permission of Bill Feidt, NG3K



October 2023					
2022 Oct01	2022 Oct15	Marquesas	TX7G	Auto QSL	By F6BCW fm Hiva Oa; 80-10m; CW SSB, perhaps FT8 RTTY
2022 Oct02	2022 Oct15	Seychelles	S79	LoTW	By DL5RDO as DL5/DL5RDO fm La Digue I; 40-10m; CW SSB; 100w; end-fed quarter wave wires; QSL via DL5RDO (B/d)
2022 Oct02	2022 Oct17	Maldives	8Q7TD	IK1TTD (B/d)	By IK1TTD fm Fasmendhoo I (IOTA AS-013); mainly 20m; end-fed wire, vertical; spare time operation
2022 Oct03	2022 Oct18	Albania	ZA	OE6VCG	By OE6VCG as ZA/OE6VCG fm nr Shkodra; HF; FT8 FT4 JT65
2022 Oct06	2022 Oct13	Mariana Is	AH0	LoTW	By WA7WJR as AH0/WA7WJR; HF; QRV for Oceania Contest, CW; QSL via WA7WJR
2022 Oct05	2022 Oct17	Comoros	D60AE	LoTW	By F4AJQ F1ULQ F2DX F4AZF F4ESV F5AGB F5NTZ F8AVK F8EFU F8GGV DL3GA HB9GWJ ON7RN EI5GM EI9FBB fm IOTA AF-007; 160-10m; CW SSB RTTY FT8 FT4 + QO-100 satellite; dedicated to F5NQL (SK); QSL via Club Log OQRS, F5GSJ
2022 Oct06	2022 Oct13	Mariana Is	AH0	LoTW	By WA7WJR as AH0/WA7WJR fm Rota I (IOTA OC-086) HF; QRV fo Oceania DX CW; will try to activate K-9713 thru K-9716; QSL via WA7WJR
2022 Oct08	2022 Oct17	Madagascar	5R8FG	IZ6BRJ (B/d)	By IK6QON fm Nosy Be and Nosy Iranja (IOTA AS-057), and Diego Suarez; HF; CW SSB; 100w; vertical; holiday style operation
2022 Oct11	2022 Oct22	Madagascar	5R8	LoTW	By PA3EWP as 5R8WP, DL2AWG as 5W8WG, DK2AMM as 5W8MM, PG5M as 5R8CG fm Nosy Be I (IOTA AF-057); 160-6m; CW SSB RTTY FT8; 2 kw stns
2022 Oct13	2022 Oct20	Montserrat	VP2	Home Call	By K7NM as VP2MLB, AC7ZN as VP2MZN, WA5POK as VP2MOK, KM4TYV as VP2MYV, K5LDA as VP2MDA, KD6XH as VP2MXH fm Gingerbread Hill; 160-6m; CW SSB FT8 FT4
2022 Oct14	2022 Oct26	Benin	TY0RU	LoTW	By RA1ZZ + team; 160-6m; CW SSB FT8; QSL via Club Log OQRS
2022 Oct19	2022 Nov29	Malawi	7Q6M	LoTW	By K6ZO; 160-6m; QRV for CQWW DX SSB and CW
2022 Oct20	2022 Oct23	Monaco	3A	LoTW	By DL2SBY as 3A/DL2SBY; 30-10m; FT8, perhaps CW; QSL via Club Log OQRS or DL2SBY direct
2022 Oct19	2022 Oct23	Belize	V3E	LoTW	By V31DX V31US V32PC XE2AA XE1AY fm Mauger Caye (IOTA NA-123); 80-10m; CW SSB FT8; 100w; Spiderbeam; QSL via Club Log, IZ8CCW
2022 Oct25	2022 Nov04	Saba & Sint Eustatius	PJ5	LoTW	By W5JON as PJ5/W5JON; 60-6m; SSB FT8; yagi, verticals; QSL also OK via W5JON direct
2022 Oct26	2022 Nov03	Cocos Keeling	VK9CM	EB7DX	By VK6VY VK6SJ VK6CQ; 80-10m, some 6m; CW SSB FT8 RTTY; VK9C in CQWW DX SSB
2022 Oct27	2022 Oct31	Honduras	HR9	K6VHF	By K6VHF as K6VHF/HR9 fm Roatan (IOTA-057); HF; SSB CW FT8; 100w
2022 Oct25	2022 Nov10	Papua New Guinea	P29RO	LoTW	By DL7VEE DL7JOM DL6KAC DL4SVA DL2RNS DL1KWK DK3CG DJ9RR DJ9KH DJ7TO DG2RON fm IOTA OC-240 (QJ30pl); 160-6m; CW SSB RTTY FT8 (f/h); QSL via Club Log OQRS (your card not needed), see Web for full details
2022 Oct29	2022 Nov07	Djibouti	J28MD	LoTW	By IZ8CCW IZ4UEZ IZ3GNG IZ2GNQ YO8WW AG4W IK4QJF DJ5IW DL6LZM DL8JJ KO8SCA DL8OBF NG7M IU8LMC fm LK11px; 160-10m; CW SSB RTTY FT8; QSL via IK2VUC (details)